

RSC BRIEFIN

1 DECEMBER 1955

BACKGROUND--EAST BERLIN

- I. Using the 27 Nov incident of detention of a US party travelling in a radio-equipped car in East Berlin as an excuse, the East German Communist regime is trying to assert its sovereignty over East Berlin.
 - A. The regime has indicated that it intends to restrict Allied access to this part of the divided city.
 - B. The assertion (29 Nov) by General Dibrova, Soviet commandant in Berlin, that East Berlin is an integral part of the "German Democratic Republic" threatens to put an end, for all practical purposes, to the Western allies' ability to exercise their quadripartite rights in East Berlin.

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II. Ditt va's assertion opens the way to East Germany to interfere with Allied travel in East Berlin to the same extent that it is prepared to do so within East Germany and provides an opportunity to attempt to force Britain, France and the United States to deal directly with East German authorities.

- A. A statement on 30 Nov by Bruno Baum, East German party leader, that Allied vehicles would no longer be permitted to wander about in East Berlin suggests that restrictions on Allied movements in the Soviet Sector are contemplated.
- B. For past six months, the East Germans have frequently complained about "espionage centers" maintained by Western powers in West Berlin and have threatened to take countermeasures that would bring "hardships" to the West Berliners.

C. The East Germans have taken various measures to prevent their subjects from entering West Berlin, and--now that it has asserted sovereignty over East Berlin--stricter controls at the East-West Berlin boundary can be expected.